



# State of South Carolina

## Office of the Governor

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GOVERNOR

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May 2, 2007

The Honorable Robert W. Harrell, Jr.  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Post Office Box 11867  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Mr. Speaker and Members of the House:

I am hereby returning without my approval H. 3115, R-33.

This legislation allows special purpose districts that provide sewage collection and disposal services financing for construction of lateral sewer collection lines. Although well-intended, I believe this legislation continues to erode the principle of home rule – while enhancing special purpose districts.

Special purpose districts were created in South Carolina during the days of mill towns, long before home rule was added to the Constitution. In those days, rural mill towns did not receive water or sewer services from nearby cities or even the counties in which they were located and, as a result, special purpose districts were created to provide these services. However, with the advent of home rule, and the growth of city and county governments, special purpose districts, I believe, are no longer necessary. In many cases, local governments have made special purpose districts redundant.

Today, South Carolinians spend roughly 130 percent of the national average on government, which comes, in part, as a result of the multiple layers of government that exist. For example, Darlington County Water and Sewer Authority provides water and sewer service to the unincorporated areas of Darlington County, parts of Lee County, and a small part of Florence County. However, the City of Florence provides water and sewer to all of Florence County, including the area served by Darlington County Water and Sewer Authority. Ultimately, it is the taxpayers who bear the costs of these types of overlaps.

As an administration, we have long held the view that accountability to the people is necessary in government. The result of these multiple, and, at times, conflicting layers of government is a lack of accountability in the system. In some cases, special purpose districts have the ability to tax, further diluting who ultimately must answer to the people for the decisions that affect their lives. Since the advent of home rule by the people in 1974, local governments, not state created

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entities, have increasingly become the line of accountability back to the people. Since we have long supported home rule, we would disagree with the notion that special purpose districts should be given greater authority to draw on resources from the people as this bill would allow. Given this philosophy, this administration cannot support legislation that sustains or increases the power of special purpose districts in South Carolina.

For these reasons, I am vetoing H. 3115, R-33 and returning it without my approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'm' followed by a flourish, representing Mark Sanford.

Mark Sanford